



Wayside Exhibit Panel Materials

There is an increasing number of materials that are, or that may be, suitable for the outdoor presentation of interpretive text and color graphics. Here is an overview of the various technologies that are currently available.

Screenprints

Screenprints are made by forcing vinyl inks through polyester screens (that have been stretched taut within a frame) to create images on high quality paper.

For outdoor use, screenprints are typically embedded in liquid polyester reinforced with glass fibers (i.e., fiberglass) which is hardened into a rigid panel.

NPS Suppliers:

GS Images 301 791-6920

General Graphics 301 729-1401

Porcelain Enamel

Porcelain enamel panels are made by applying mineral oxide pigments suspended in a ground glass frit to a steel substrate. The frit is applied to the panel by spraying, brushing, or screen printing. After each application, the panel is fired at high temperatures to bond the colorant to the metal substrate.

NPS Suppliers:

Winsor Fireform LLC 360 786-8200

Digital Prints

Although several different digital (or direct) imaging technologies are currently available, only two are commonly used for outdoor exhibits.

Inkjet Prints

Inkjet prints are made by computer-driven printers that apply ink through small nozzles (jets) to a variety of surfaces.

The resulting print can either be embedded in fiberglass, consolidated within phenolic and melamine resins and covered with a hardened optical coating, or mounted onto the front of a rigid material (lexan or aluminum) and covered by an acrylic overlamine.

The NPS currently has no contracts with digital suppliers.